

∴ MUSEUM NEWS ∴

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THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

No. 60

TOLEDO, OHIO

June, 1931



MARY MAGDALEN AT THE TOMB

Gift of Arthur J. Secor

JEAN JACQUES HENNER

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS



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FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

EDITOR, BLAKE-MORE GODWIN, M. A.
Director of The Toledo Museum of Art.

No. 60 JUNE 1931

Art is that science whose laws applied to all things made by man make them most pleasing to the senses.

George W. Stevens.

EDITORIAL

THE Nineteenth Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings now current at the Museum is the smallest ever assembled. There is more than one reason for its restriction to but twenty-nine of the best pictures exhibited in the East during the past year. The obvious—and adequate—one is that some minor alterations in the present building to join to it the new additions make it necessary to close a few of our galleries for a time during the summer months.

But there is a more important reason, and one which will be equally apparent to all who view the exhibition. It is that works of art require adequate space for their proper presentation. The twenty-nine paintings hang in two sizable galleries. They could have been crowded into one. But they are, we believe, far more effective as shown.

This brings us to the answer to a question. We are frequently asked what we are going to

put into the new additions which we are erecting. The answer is space. No more will our galleries be congested.

We have never been adherents of the stamp-album school of gallery installation. We have always held for the single line hanging of pictures. Always, however, our single line has been too crowded. Soon this will no longer be true, for we will have the requisite space for the proper display of our works of art.

The advertiser knows the value of white space on his page. The Museum can well afford to follow his example.

Some one has said that space about a picture is like silence after music. Certainly nothing can so enhance the value of a great painting as an adequate setting.

In passing, our summer exhibition is well worth the attention of our members. Due to the limitations of space, we are unable to represent every phase of contemporary American painting, and hence there is much lacking that might well have been included. The group selected is even so a most interesting and colorful one. Some of the artists represented are well known from previous exhibitions. Others are newcomers to our galleries. The list includes: Jean MacLane, Elizabeth Paxton, Frederick C. Friesseke, Tod Lindenmuth, Everett Warner, Marguerite S. Pearson, Maurice Fromkes, Frederic M. Grant, Jonas Lie, Power O'Malley, Andrew Winter, Julius Delbos, Nancy Maybin Ferguson, Walter Farndon, DeWitt M. Lockman, Les Martin, Chauncey F. Ryder, Paul Starrett Sample, Donald Teague, Joseph Allworthy, Leland Curtis, Mary Gray, Dines Carlsen, Charles S. Chapman, Carlo Ciampaglia, Roy Brown, William Auerbach-Levy, Felicie Waldo Howell and Wayman Adams.

The contents of the Museum News are regularly indexed in the Art Index, published monthly and available in most libraries.

THE GIFT OF A HENNER

A RECENT accession of great importance to the Museum's collections is a masterpiece by Jean Jacques Henner entitled *The Magdalen at the Tomb*, the gift of President Arthur J. Secor. The author of this work, born on March 5, 1829, at Bernwiller, in Alsace, was the youngest of a farmer's numerous family. His father thought that he saw in the boy's instinctive childish scrawlings the evidences of artistic genius, and contrary to usual custom, did not discourage his son. On the other hand, he brought him from the neighboring Mülhausen old engravings and pictures as a stimulus for his efforts. Such was his facility that at length his family decided to send him to school, and he was placed first with a teacher at Altkirch, and later with another at Strassburg. Thence it was but anatural step, after an interval of some months spent chiefly in drawing from the works of Holbein in Basle, to the ateliers of Paris.

He arrived there in the midst of the ineffectual but exciting revolution of 1848. He supported himself by doing portraits at a few francs each, and before long received a scholarship. Ten years later he was awarded the Prix de Rome. While in Italy he worked conscientiously, drawing, painting, and studying the old masters. In 1861 he journeyed to Venice and was caught in the spell of Correggio and Giorgione. During this period he also began to paint those Magdalens and other nude figures enshrouded in mysterious atmosphere from which he derived his chief fame. He continued also to paint strong portraits, chiefly of men.

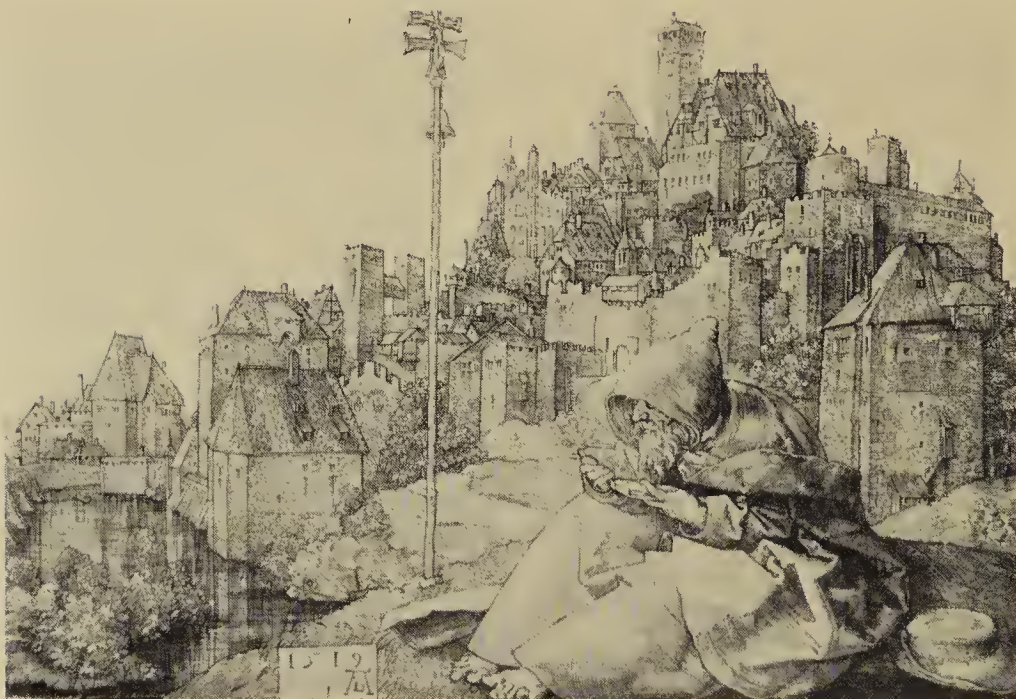
In 1864 he returned from Rome to Paris. His pictures sent to the Salon had previously gained him a medal, and other awards were his in quick succession. His medal-winning picture of 1866 did not please him and he destroyed it, to be reproached by Manet for having destroyed the best picture he had ever done. From the time of his return from Rome Henner was a successful artist. His pictures were admitted to the Salons, they were acquired for the Luxembourg and the provincial museums, and he found many private purchasers, not only in Europe but also across the Atlantic. He continued to paint actively almost until his death in 1905.

Henner lived through a very interesting period in the history of France. Almost simul-

taneously with the French Revolution there had begun in England, with the application of the steam engine to machinery by James Watt, that much more far-reaching and ever-continuing industrial revolution. This new force did not invade France until after Napoleon's downfall, but by 1847 the one small steam engine employed there in his time had multiplied to nearly five thousand, and many French cities had become important manufacturing centers. In 1848, just as Henner arrived in Paris to pursue his study of art, revolution had burst into flame throughout the continent, and the liberal parties of France, Italy, Germany and Austria had seized control of the governments. In France Louis Philippe abdicated, a republic was established, and Louis Napoleon was elected president. By skillful manoeuvring he soon became emperor as Napoleon III. His reign promised "cheap bread, great public works, and holidays" and for the second of these it gave abundant fulfilment, as the Paris of today still bears witness. In 1870, however, came the Franco-Prussian war, Sedan, and the end of the Second Empire. Followed turmoil more bloody than the Reign of Terror, and at last the establishment of the Republic. Through all of this turmoil art pursued a fairly even course, for the French are an art loving people, and recognize its importance to the enjoyment of life. Hardly an evidence of confusion is to be found in the work of Henner, save the "Bara" of 1882, commemorative of youthful enthusiasm for the Republic.

The Revolution and the Napoleonic era, with its admiration for the cold formalism of the Romans, had halted the luscious painting of the flesh. David, leader of the Classicists, finding his inspiration in antique marbles, had in his painting turned flesh into stone. Henner, inspired by the work of Correggio, set for himself the task of turning art back to the painting of real flesh, vibrant in light against deep shadow. Of Henner's second and most characteristic manner, Richard Muther, in his *History of Modern Painting*, says:

"In his endeavor to render the tint and tender softness of flesh as delicately as possible, he sought at the same time for light which should intensify the clear tone of the nude body. This he found in that time of evening,



ST. ANTHONY READING

ALBRECHT DURER

which one might call Henner's hour, when the landscape, overshadowed by the twilight, gradually loses colour, and only a small blue space in the sky or a silent forest-lake still for a moment preserves the reflection of vanishing daylight. In this tranquil harmony of nature after sunset, the white pallor of the human body seems to have absorbed all the daylight and to be giving it forth again, while the surrounding landscape is already merging into colourless shadow. * * * And by this method of painting flesh and of throwing light upon it, Henner has won for himself an important place in modern art."

The Magdalen at the Tomb, the gift of President Secor, is a most perfect representation of Henner's genius. It has all of those qualities of rich warm flesh painting against a dark background on which his fame rests. The slender nude figure of the Magdalen is admirably set off by the rich blue drapery, which forms a color contrast to the auburn hair. The same colors lowered in value, produce a background effective in its tonal harmony. This picture is one of the most widely known of the artist's works, having been frequently reproduced by art publishers. In the Secor Gallery it adds another chapter to the story of nineteenth century French painting, the later portions of which are so well told in this collection.

DURER'S ST. ANTHONY READING

ST. ANTHONY the Hermit, who lived before 350 A. D., against a background of a sixteenth century town may seem an incongruous combination, but Albrecht Dürer's artistry has brought them together in a small and harmonious composition that is timeless.

This beautiful engraving, recently acquired by the Museum, is the St. Anthony Reading, dated 1519. It is the latest of Dürer's great works, and one of the most charming. In it he has followed his own precept: "Guard thyself from superfluity" and the symmetry and harmony of the picture is such that no detail could be eliminated without harm to the perfection of the composition.

While the figure of the Saint occupies the foreground, the landscape view behind him has equal—perhaps even more—interest. The fortified town built on a hill suggests Nuremberg, Dürer's native city, though authorities declare the details are more particularly taken from a drawing of Trent by Dürer, now in a Bremen, Germany, collection. The unworked sky accents the varied outline of the building tops, forming a frame for the Saint and the placid stream which flows at the foot of the hill.

The story of the hermit, St. Anthony, is an interesting one of the very early days of



FONTAINEBLEAU

Gift of Jefferson D. Robinson, in memory of Mary Elizabeth Robinson

NARCISSE DIAZ

Christianity. He was born at Alexandria, Egypt, the son of a wealthy family. When he and his sister were orphaned, he divided his wealth with her and gave all his share to the poor, joining a company of hermits in the desert. For twenty years he lived in a cavern and when he came forth to preach and comfort the sick and afflicted, he was not aged except that his hair was white and his beard long. Many were his converts and at one time there were five thousand hermits living in caves and ancient tombs in the desert. He lived to the age of one hundred and four, and was canonized in 357 A. D.

St. Anthony is represented by Dürer in the habit of a monk, he being considered the founder of Monachism. He sits in pious contemplation, completely absorbed in his devotional reading. His staff, surmounted by a double cross, suggesting a crutch, the symbol of his age and feebleness, is in the ground beside him. A bell will be noticed attached to the staff. This is to signify the power of St. Anthony to exorcise evil spirits, the sound of the bell overcoming the demons.

Although of very small dimensions, the engraving being less than four inches high by six inches wide, and priced by Dürer at twenty for one florin, it is a gem of technical excellence, beauty of design and detail; one of the most perfect examples of the line engraver's art. Our impression is of a particularly beautiful silvery quality, which gives it an especial charm and delicacy.

A BEQUEST OF PAINTINGS

FOUR artists belonging to, or closely associated with, the Barbizon group are represented by paintings bequeathed to the Museum by the late Jefferson D. Robinson in memory of Mrs. Robinson. Two, Diaz and Dupre, were residents at Barbizon, and a third, Felix Ziem, had one of his four studios there. The fourth, the American landscape painter, George Inness, was influenced by the work of the Fontainebleau school, especially that of Corot, although he developed his own style to a great extent before becoming acquainted with the paintings of the Frenchmen.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS



THE OLIVES

Gift of Jefferson D. Robinson, in memory of Mary Elizabeth Robinson

GEORGE INNESS

George Inness' landscape, *The Olives*, was painted in 1873, when Inness was in Italy for the third time. In this, the middle period of his career, he developed the richness of color and the introduction of light and atmosphere which carried him far from the sombre-toned landscapes of the early Hudson River School. Already we note a warm haze over the scene, a characteristic prominent in his later works. The canvas is what Inness called a "civilized landscape," peaceful and satisfying. There are no harsh notes in its color scheme. Rich greens in the foreground are greyed for the olive trees, which are set against a far-reaching view of gently rolling lands browned by the sun. The sky is massed with clouds, which hang low over the valley. The composition is one of charming simplicity, with the meticulous detail of Inness' earlier works relegated to a place secondary to the achievement of effect.

Narcisse Diaz and Jules Dupre are akin through their close friendship with Rousseau and because of the many similar occurrences in their lives. Both achieved success early and were honored with medals and with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor. Diaz' *Fontainebleau* is a typical canvas by this artist, full of light, color and brilliance. Although a cripple from boyhood, Diaz was of a particularly sunny and cheerful disposition,

and this characteristic is evidenced throughout his works. He was especially interested in the painting of trees, and suggestions from Rousseau added power and dignity to his painting. Diaz was above all, however, a colorist. The canvas in the Robinson gift is a fine example of this quality, the rich reds and browns of the foliage contrasting with a glimpse of brilliant blue sky above and a bit of the same color reflected in a small pool in the foreground. Highlights on the trunks of the trees lead the eye to the interior of the forest and to a vista through the trees.

One of the leading influences in the life of Dupre was the English painter, John Constable. Dupre made his acquaintance when he was twenty-three and Constable about sixty, but the young man greatly admired the work of the older, and spent some time painting in England. Dupre's friendship with Rousseau was also a strong factor in the development of his art. When Rousseau failed to receive the decoration of the Legion, which was accorded Dupre, the latter gave up painting entirely for three years. His works after that time are marked by the use of brown and other sombre tones. The small pastoral canvas in the Robinson gift is one of these. He painted both at Barbizon and along the Oise. The sobriety of his work contrasts with the gaiety of that of Diaz.



VENETIAN SCENE

FELIX ZIEM

Gift of Jefferson D. Robinson, in memory of Mary Elizabeth Robinson

Felix Ziem is most noted for his paintings of Venice. He spent much of his time studying and painting the architecture and color of that picturesque city. The golden buildings, the blue sky and water and the flashing reds offered opportunities of which Ziem took full advantage in his compositions of jewel-like brilliance. The painting in this collection is called *Venetian Scene* and shows the Doge's Palace at the right and a view of the Grand Canal looking toward Santa Maria della Salute, whose white domes gleam in the distance. In the foreground the eye is attracted by a group of richly costumed people stepping from a gondola and being received by another group.

These four paintings now installed in the Museum may be studied in comparison with other works by the same artists in the Secor Collection.

AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE HEAD

AMONG the examples of sculpture shown in the Egyptian Gallery is a small limestone head, which was presented to the Museum by the late Henry W. Wilhelm. It is part of a statuette, evidently of a man, for the wig is of a type worn exclusively by men. Our Honorary Curator of Egyptology, Mrs. Caroline

Ransom Williams, classes this head as Theban, probably about 1500 B. C., basing her attribution very largely upon the wig itself as well as upon other more general stylistic qualities.

The face is beardless and youthful in appearance, slightly archaic about the prominent eyes, and somewhat negroid in character, with thick curving lips. Much of the thin gesso-like base which originally covered the entire surface of the face and neck remains, and there are also evidences of a red pigment which was used for the flesh tone, as well as slight traces of a dark color at the rims of the eyelids. The wig is placed low on the brow and rises in a long backward curve, which at the sides follows the contour of the exposed ears and curving down behind them brings its strands in close to the neck in front. The ends of the wig are cut off straight at the back but are longer in front sloping downward in a sharp line toward the throat. Each strand of the wig forms a ridge of close zigzags with some of the original dark blue color still lodged in the crevices.

The predominant characteristic of this head is its superb simplicity, dignity and serenity. The cutting is excellent, the suave, smooth nature of the contours seeming almost modeled rather than chiseled in stone. This feeling of modeled form is increased by the softly rounded nose and chin and the curve of the



EGYPTIAN PORTRAIT HEAD
Gift of Henry W. Wilhelm

throat, and further augmented by subtle surface modulations—a dip beneath the lower lip, slight concavities beneath the eyes at each side of the nose, a cleft above the centre of the upper lip. The severe straight line of the wig across the forehead seems by contrast to enhance the fresh naturalism of the features, while its severity is tempered by the long sweeping lines of the hair.

The fine workmanship is a delightful blending of naturalism and decorative conventionalization. There is enough realism of contour

and expression to suggest a portrait, but the details are frankly decorative. The upper eyelids seem to fold back at the edge in relief, and the eyebrows are also like folds in low relief, tapering to attenuated points over the temples. The ears are somewhat stylized and pattern-like and the perfect symmetry of the nostrils approaches pure design. Each contour of the face and neck and wig seems to blend into the next with a naturalness and ease which make for beauty and bespeak a master hand in the actual execution of the work.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS



FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

Gift of the Athena Society and Friends

ELINOR M. BARNARD

GIFTS OF ART SOCIETIES

The Museum has received as the gift of Toledo art societies two watercolors by contemporary artists. In the autumn of 1927, the Athena Society, which was founded in the old Museum on Madison Avenue, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary and commemorated the event by presenting to the Museum a painting by Elinor M. Barnard. Last spring the Tile Club, which was in existence before the organization of the Museum and whose members were most active in promoting the Museum idea when it was new to Toledo, made a gift to the Museum of a work by Harold Putnam Browne.

The artists of both pictures are well known in Toledo. Miss Barnard, of English birth, has made a specialty of the portraiture of children in transparent watercolor and many Toledo homes are graced with works from her facile brush. Mr. Browne has exhibited here frequently as has his father, George Elmer Browne. American born, he has studied in

Paris and in Munich as well as with his father and F. Luis Mora. From his exhibitions of paintings done in Europe and Northern Africa shown in Toledo last spring, the Tile Club secured one of his most pleasing pictures entitled *Evening in Cairo* and presented it to the Museum. It is in watercolor, the medium which he most favors and handles with dignity and strength. In it he has secured a tonal harmony of blues accented by the golden glow of the sunset and its reflection on the dome of a mosque.

Miss Barnard's work is a still life, a vase of flowers on a table against a dark background. Its technique is highly impressionistic and most masterly, showing a thorough understanding of the medium and a crisp and fresh handling.

The Museum is most happy to have these two paintings exemplifying two distinct means of the use of watercolor and bearing evidence of the continued interest of the Athena Society, now known as the Toledo Women Artists, and the Tile Club in this institution.



ENGRAVED GLASS BEAKER

ROMAN, THIRD CENTURY

Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey

THE WORRINGEN BEAKER ACQUIRED

THE Museum's collection of ancient glass is one of the most extensive and comprehensive in the world. This is not our judgment, but that of competent observers, many of whom have visited Toledo for no other purpose than to study our collection. In our own estimation it is nearly complete. Of course, in respect to collections of works of art, opinions as to completeness may vary greatly. In a restricted sense of the word, no collection can

ever be complete. With a broader view, however, any group that shows—in the case of glass, for instance—a splendid example of the work of every period and country, each general form, type, and style of decoration, may well be considered complete. It is not necessary even for the student to present every minute variant of a general type, and to do so for the average visitor is wearisome beyond measure. Our collection has been lacking some important

and rare examples, notably of the primitive Egyptian glass, pieces signed by their makers, engraved glass, gold glass, and Arabic enamelled glass.

One of these lacunae we have recently filled by the acquisition of what is perhaps the most important piece of engraved Roman glass. This is the well-known Worringen Beaker.

This most interesting piece of ancient glass is remarkable for its size alone, being eight inches high and five and a quarter inches in diameter at the top, and it has remained intact for seventeen centuries. It was discovered about a hundred years ago, in a third-century tomb at Worringen, near Cologne, Germany. The Romans had carried the art of glass making throughout their dominions, and due to the prevalence of the necessary materials it flourished especially in the region about Cologne. Hence we may assume that the Worringen Beaker was made in the neighborhood of its place of discovery. The surface of the olive green glass is almost entirely covered with an engraved scene.

This scene consists of a number of figures shown against a background indicated in a summary fashion—with the brevity of shorthand notes, but far more clarity. Seated are two female figures, one fully clothed, as indicated by a cross-hatching, the other seminude. A third figure, a nude youth, approaches this group, while behind him are two Amorini between whom is a huge wine jar. Beyond them is a tall building, while between them are indicated the windows of another. Above the female figures are indicated in symbolic fashion two classic buildings, one with a dome and the other having a pediment.

This vase was first published by Weerth in the *Bonner Jahrbücher*, No. 71. Later it was reproduced and described by Anton Kisa in *Das Glas im Altertume*, II, 662-665. Both

considered the scene to represent Venus introducing a young woman to the fruit of the vine, and found in the tall building a structure for the storing on the upper floor of sealed amphorae of wine to be mellowed by smoke rising from a hearth below.

In his recent book on Glass, Gustavus Eisen has developed a theory that Hera is shown with Hebe, the cup-bearer of the gods, who is sampling some new wine. The youth who has brought it has ascended from the Tiber, as indicated by the fish, by the *Scalae Caci*, the stairs which led up to the House of Romulus, shown by the domed structure. The pedimented building then becomes the temple of Hera, the tree back of the youth the palm of the Palatine hill, and the tall building the tower from which the Emperors viewed the games in the Circus. The scene is thus localized on the south side of the Palatine hill.

If this be correct, the engraver of the glass must have visited Rome, and have remembered the buildings which he saw there on the Palatine in the third century, before executing his work at Cologne. Perhaps he may have been a Roman sent to ply his craft on the Rhine. In any event he was an artist of no mean ability, as has been remarked by Kisa. The figures are engraved in outline, within which the surface of the glass has been lightly etched, to bring them out against the polished surface of the glass. Above the scene is a conventional border and below it a band of foliate ornament, both executed with great skill.

The beaker was acquired about 1840 by Disch, the Cologne glass connoisseur, and later passed by auction into the Basilewsky collection. It was for a time shown in the Provincial Museum of Bonn. Now it has come to the Toledo Museum to form the center of the engraved glass section of the Edward Drummond Libbey collection.



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